

Statement of Existing and Intended Use
Application of Special Exception and Variance
Karen Marsh
1837 Vernon Street NW
Square 2555 Lot 0036

On behalf of Karen Marsh (the “Applicant”), the owner of the property located at 1837 Vernon Street NW (Square 2555, Lot 0036) (the “Property”), we are submitting this request for Special Exception relief from Subtitle F § 207.1, pursuant to Subtitle F § 5201.1 and Variance relief from Subtitle F §§ 201.1 and 210.1 under Subtitle X §§ 1000.1 and 1002.1 of the Zoning Regulations. Specifically, the Applicant is seeking relief to allow for (1) the construction of an elevated egress stair/walkway within the required rear yard, which exceeds the lot occupancy standards; and (2) construction of a 64 square foot upper level addition to accommodate an interior access stair, which exceeds the Floor Area Ratio (“FAR”) standards. These modifications are necessary to permit the creation of an apartment on the upper level of the existing row building, consistent with the intent of the RA-2 Zone and the Property’s historic use (as a group home). Importantly, the proposed construction will not have any adverse impacts on the surrounding community, and no objections have been raised by nearby neighbors. In fact, the immediately adjacent property owners have expressed their support for the application.

The Property is located along Vernon Street NW, approximately equidistant between 18th street and 19th Street, in the RA-2 zoning district. The Property is also located within the Washington Heights Historic District. The Property has a net lot area of approximately 1,733 square feet and is currently improved with an approximately 3,805 square foot, four-story, single-family row dwelling that was built circa 1899.

No change is proposed to the residential use of the Property. The Applicant has resided in the existing dwelling for over the past 30 years and desires to remain. However, the large, historic home is much bigger than the Applicant’s family needs. As such, the Applicant desires to create a second apartment on the upper floor of the existing building, to provide additional housing in this desirable neighborhood. This additional unit is consistent with the Property’s historic use as a group home from approximately the 1970’s to 2006. This Application will help to address the region’s housing crisis and meet the Mayor’s goal of delivering a significant amount of additional housing units. This relief is only required to provide legal fire separation and egress to the upper level unit in this Residential Apartment Zone.